

Washington, D.C. – U.S. Rep. Tom Rooney (FL-16) today announced that the Army Corps of Engineers has awarded a \$32.4 million contract to begin construction on the first phase of the C-44 Reservoir portion of the Indian River Lagoon-South project in Martin County.

“The Indian River Lagoon project is a key component of overall Everglades restoration,” Rooney said. “Constructing the C-44 reservoir means a cleaner lagoon, healthier fish and wildlife, and reduced toxic algal blooms. The project is critical to maintaining Martin County’s marine and tourism industries, preserving property values, and boosting our local economy.

“The Indian River Lagoon is the most biologically diverse estuary in North America, but has suffered immense damage due to releases from Lake Okeechobee during high water events in the lake. This project will help alleviate the strain on the Lagoon and restore its natural flow and salinity.”

Rooney has been a strong advocate for the Indian River Lagoon project during his time in the House, successfully leading the fight to overcome the dreaded “new start” hurdle on construction in 2009. This year, he has met with representatives of the Corps on numerous occasions about the C-44 Reservoir portion of the project, and wrote Jacksonville District Commander Colonel Alfred Pantano a letter last week urging the Corps to award the C-44 contract as quickly as possible.

The project was authorized in the Water Resources Development Act of 2007 as a component of the Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan. The project enjoys unprecedented local support, with Martin County contributing \$50 million to the project, including land that will be used for the reservoir.

[C44 Contract Letter to Colonel Pantano.pdf](#)

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